

## **Duane Roth and Art Torres to Become CIRM Vice-Chairs**

Posted: March 12, 2009

Sacramento, Calif., March 12, 2009 – Leadership for the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine, the state stem cell agency, has been strengthened with the addition of two vice-chairs to the agency's Governing Board.

The 29-member board voted to approve the nominations of both Duane Roth and Art Torres, who together bring strong biotech industry and patient advocacy, legislative and healthcare insurance experience to the positions.

Bob Klein, chair of the Governing Board, hailed the decision as a victory for Californians anxious for stem cell-based therapies. "The experience of these two outstanding vice-chairs will help ensure that CIRM delivers on the promise of new therapies for patients. We face extraordinary financial and medical challenges in driving stem cell therapies through to patients in the short timeframe we have set for ourselves. I will immediately embrace the talent and dedication of these two vice-chairs as we work together to overcome the hurdles that lie before us," Klein said.

Lieutenant Governor John Garamendi, State Treasurer Bill Lockyear and Controller John Chiang nominated long-time patient advocate and cancer survivor Art Torres to the vice-chair position. Torres served on the Board of Directors of the AIDS Healthcare Foundation and is currently on the Board of "One Legacy," an organ transplant foundation in Los Angeles. In the 1980s he worked to get funding for early HIV/AIDS research, before most public officials recognized the severity of the epidemic. During his 20 years in the California legislature, Torres chaired the Senate Insurance Committee, the Assembly Health Committee and the Senate Joint Committee on Science and Technology. His experience with governmental health care coverage and insurance reimbursement issues will be invaluable as CIRM works with state and national leaders to provide affordable stem cell-based therapies. The position Torres will fill is mandated in Prop 71 and is eligible for a salary, which the board voted to approve at \$75,000.

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger nominated current board member Duane Roth to the vice-chair position, citing his extensive experience in the biotech industry and dedicated service on the Governing Board. Roth is CEO of San Diego-based CONNECT. His 30-year history in the biotech industry includes overseeing the launch of more than 20 FDA medical therapy and product approvals, experience that will help propel CIRM's goal of funding research that will lead to FDA-approved therapies. He has also devoted extensive time to healthcare policy and patient advocacy, serving as the Chairman of the annual Heart Walk for three years and receiving the American Heart Association Outstanding Leadership Award. As a member of the Governing Board, Roth has worked closely with Klein and Michael Goldberg to develop CIRM's loan program. The Vice-chairmanship represents a natural extension of that leadership. Roth will fill a new position created by the board via a change in the bylaws and is eligible for the same per diem payments as board members, which Roth has traditionally declined.

The Board also approved funding the 11 Bridges to Stem Cell Research Awards worth \$17.5 million that they had tentatively approved at the January 30 meeting. At the previous meeting the board voted to approve the grants but to withhold funding until they had additional financial information. CIRM has approval to proceed with \$400 million in general obligation bond private placements, allowing the agency to accelerate the sale of bonds. CIRM has on hand sufficient funds to carry through the end of 2009. The bond sales will cover future commitments to multi-year grants.

The programs funded by these Bridges grants will provide comprehensive lecture and laboratory courses, facilitate internship placement, and advise and mentor students on research progress and career opportunities. The graduates of these programs will have the expertise needed to staff California's expanding stem cell research laboratories in both industry and academic organizations.

"The Bridges grants are critically important to the future of regenerative medicine in California. Without personnel trained to carry out this research the field won't move as quickly as we would like. Funding Bridges grants now will give those schools time to establish their programs for the 2009-2010 academic year," said Alan Trounson, president of CIRM.

The Board voted to continue deferring funding for the Research Training Program II grants that they had tentatively approved at the previous meeting. Many of the programs have funding that carries over from 2008, which gives the agency time to evaluate this funding priority.

## Bridges to Stem Cell Research

Application Number	Institution	Budget
TB1-01175	California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo	\$1,396,509
TB1-01176	California State Polytechnic University, Pomona	\$1,436,797
TB1-01177	California State University, Channel Islands	\$1,733,406
TB1-01182	California State University, Long Beach	\$1,337,700
TB1-01184	California State University, Sacramento	\$1,321,440
TB1-01186	California State University, San Marcos	\$1,732,164
TB1-01190	Humboldt State University	\$1,616,363
TB1-01192	Pasadena City College	\$1,727,991
TB1-01193	San Diego State University	\$1,716,030
TB1-01194	San Francisco State University	\$1,713,558
TB1-01195	San Jose State University	\$1,733,760
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$17,465,718</b>

**About CIRM** CIRM was established in 2004 with the passage of Proposition 71, the California Stem Cell Research and Cures Act. The statewide ballot measure, which provided \$3 billion in funding for stem cell research at California universities and research institutions, was overwhelmingly approved by voters, and called for the establishment of an entity to make grants and provide loans for stem cell research, research facilities, and other vital research opportunities. To date, the CIRM governing board has approved 279 research and facility grants totaling more than \$693 million, making CIRM the largest source of funding for human embryonic stem cell research in the world. For more information, please visit [www.cirm.ca.gov](http://www.cirm.ca.gov).

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